

THE JOYS THAT LIVE

JOHN E. DELONG



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The Joys That Live

By

JOHN E. DELONG



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THE JOYS THAT LIVE.

I know again the joys I knew
Back when the years were free and few;
When on the hillside in the wood
Beneath the autumn trees I stood,
And romped in piles of leaves knee-deep,
And watched the wind go with a sweep,
Swinging the many colored forms
Gayly aloft in frolic-storms.

A bird sang summer's requiem,
And Oh, how I rejoiced with him!
My heart wept not that summer fled,
When playful autumn came instead.
The grapevines dangling from the trees,
Wild grapes that glowed in autumn breeze,
Invited me to climb up high
And gather them from near the sky.

The joy of such achievement came
With brighter glow than hopes of fame,
Because my heart was wildly free
In knowing autumn's company.
Too glad I was to know the world
And have its sorrows at me hurled,
Sorrows which I too oft have seen
Treading that happy way between.

Those freer years have flown, but still
I know the old-time joyous thrill;
And those same songs of birds can sing,
And to my heart the tall oaks bring;
And on the hillside piled with leaves
That autumn-world my fancy weaves,
And those gay breezes pass me by—
I know that joys can never die.

I look afar to days ago,
And time relentlessly moves on;
Yet I have kept the joys I knew
In far-off days when years were few.

And onward still my hopes shall be
That in some vast eternity
The autumn breeze again will blow,
And I rejoice in long ago.

The joys we weave within our lives
Live on, however much time strives
To make them dim or make them few;
Like flowers they spring and live anew.
Sin's miseries their meshes weave,
And, O, how loath they are to leave!
We've followed in far-distant years
The things that flood our hearts with tears.

Build well, O soul, in morning dew;
Let miseries of sin be few;
Let golden blocks of joy and worth
Lift thee each day to higher birth:
At noon or sunset hour serene,
Joys ever back or forth are seen;
A chain of joys is thy defense,
And stronger links forever hence

Shall bind thee to the throne of God
Because these happy ways you've trod.

And in the after-after-years
With you can be no sighs nor tears;
Like violets in woodland grown,
In all the field of life you've sown
A fragrance blooming evermore,
On near, or far, or any shore.
Build well while dews shine on the green;
Thy sunset hour shall be serene;
In all the years a strength is given,
Adding a heaven unto heaven.

A POEM'S MESSAGE.

This little song has eased my heart
Ofttimes when filled with care,
And it has caused new hopes to start
And spread light everywhere,

Because it sings of human woe—
A human heart throbs here,—
Then points the way where we may know
Sweet solace and no fear.

Above the stress and strain of wrong,
Above the heartaches keen,
I'm carried by this human song,
And hills of light are seen.

Peace breaks like morning o'er the hills,
That deepens into day;
And some divine, fresh impulse fills
My heart, along the way.

O Truth, God-given like the flowers,
Sung in such artless strain,
Abide with me and rob the hours
Of time and human pain.

And many hearts are aching now,
Those that we do not know;
Then hasten, messenger, for thou
Canst heal these hearts of woe.

THE PURPOSE OF SONG.

I would sing a song that would do men good,
Not that would please them merely;
I'd show what men could do if they would,
If they would strive sincerely.

I would sing of the great things of the world
With joy and with beauty;
I'd show men the flag of triumph unfurled,
The worth and power of duty.

I would sing to the hearts that toil in pain,
Of rest that soon is coming;
I would sing to them like the quiet rain,
Or like the river's humming.

I would sing to the masterful and strong
Of use of power and duty;
I'd ask them to dare in heroic song,
And point the way of beauty.

I would sing to the weak, to make them strong,
The happy thought I'd venture;
I would pity their way and all their wrong,
And less and less would censure.

I'd sing, if the spirit of truth be mine,
Truth mighty to make men wonder
At wrongs they inflict on brothers of mine
And human souls they plunder.

I would sing of the wrongs of all the race,
Wrongs that should all be righted;
The time should be staring us in the face
When no soul is benighted.

I would sing till the stony hearts are sweet
With all of heaven's kindness,
And till human faces are all replete
With light to banish blindness.

I would sing till the tear-stained face is free
From all its burning sorrow,
Till the drooping eyes look up and see
The great and grand to-morrow.

I would sing till the world swings out of gloom
 To light that lives forever;
For the night is passing, there is no doom
 For souls that will endeavor.

I would sing with the stars God's song of hope,
 And waken souls to wonder
At the joys that wait beyond the slope
 In the afterwhiles out yonder.

A VANISHING SMILE.

He's smiling, but his smile is rather sad;
Some eighty years of life he's had;
He limps, and hums some old familiar lays
That are all filled with bygone days.

His voice is tremulous; his heart, it cheers;
It's filled with music of the years.
I wonder yet how many times we'll meet,
How long I'll see him on the street?

He seems to try to smile—the last faint ray
It is, of fleeting, closing day.
The shadows soon will chase away the glee;
Where will his singing, smiling be?

I know that ere more summers bless the world
Cold winds shall over him be hurled

And sing their ceaseless dirges through the
pine,—

O fainting one, my heart is thine!

Can I not give my strong young arm to thee,
Be thy support through years to be?

Can I not tune thy weakening heart to mine
And keep thee from earth's low confine?

How oft his voice has cheered my morning walk!
His eyes would sparkle with his talk
As he would tell of virile manhood's days,
Of tramps o'er fields and wooded ways.

How oft the wildflower he had stopped to scent
That to the summer breezes bent!

How he rejoiced in summer's wakening day!
“But then,” he said, “things pass away.”

Strange that this heart will soon its singing
cease!

This cheery heart soon rest in peace?

What has he done or failed to do on earth
That there should be of joy a dearth?

And when o'er him the cypresses shall bend,
Will flower and waving branches send
The cheery message which he always gives
To others round him while he lives?

How can that harp be broken, all unstrung,—
The last sweet song be played and sung?
And over all the silence through the years
The dirge's sound and nature's tears?

O friend, of failing powers, of eighty-three,
Freely my heart goes out to thee!
The saddest thought that to my soul is given:
That thou shalt surely soon be driven

From sunny ways and gay to some lone spot,
And there, perchance, to be forgot.
However this may be, one thing I know:
The smile shall follow where I go,

And I shall long and wonder through the years,
And shall still hope through all my tears
That no one's earthly fate shall ever be
As sad as thine has seemed to me.

THE MAN IN THE STORM.

Now see him breast the storm!
His face looks all careworn,
And yet he trudges onward with a vim:
One leg's not long enough;
It makes his pathway rough,—
Oh, how my heart goes out to pity him!

He's looking straight ahead,
With strange and earnest tread,
As though he sees a goal somewhere afar;
There's longing in that breast
And hope of honest rest—
He's going where the fireside pleasures are.

The storm beats in his face,
And through its blasts I trace
The workings of an energy divine.
He's struggling, toiling on

When strength seems almost gone,—
O, tell me what that thought can be of thine!

It seems I would despair
And call this world unfair,—
He's battling in the storm against its might
As though some power impels
Or some great hope upwells,
And stays the shattered frame amidst the fight.

He has an honest heart,
And always does his part
As though a duty were divine as God;
And now he's on his way
To close a toilsome day,
The path that he for many years has trod.

Thy toil is not in vain,
Nor useless all thy pain,
Nor futile are thy strivings toward some goal.
I feel thine impulse true,
And know—for me and you—
This struggle is a part of some great whole.

Then, friend so brave and true,
I give my heart to you
And weep while you are battling in the gale;
That pathway you have trod
Will lead me nearer God
And teach my heart that it should never fail.

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THE AFTERWHILES.

Our days are not like motions of the air
Leading onward we know not where;
I know full well what we call Fate is Love;
All here, a hand will guide above.

Not tremblingly to meet the afterwhiles
We go, but joyously, in smiles.
Our earthly days, like beams from yonder star,
Lead us where brighter glories are.

Then let the drifting years bring what they will
Of joy or pain, of good or ill:
I know at last that good will come to me,
And gladly wait what is to be.

AN OLD FRIEND.

If an old friend comes to see me,
There's always room for him;
It does not matter who or when,
Or Bill, or Tom, or Jim:
If he comes trudging through the fields
Or gets off from the cars,
He'll always find a welcome here
Beneath this roof of ours.

My friends are scattered, where they hide,
In distance many a mile,
And some have ebbed upon the tide—
Have vanished just a while;
And some whose kindly thought has been
A solace through the years
To brace my heart to struggle on
Through toil and pain and tears,

Are treading now some lonely road,
Thorn-pierced, thorn-crowned, I know,—
Are moving now by sorrow's goad,
And nothing heals their woe.

If an old friend comes to see me,
With joy filled to the brim,
It will bring my heart a pleasure
As I listen here to him;
But if the old-time smile has gone,
And rough has been his day,
Let him come in, my joy will be
To drive his gloom away.

And some, perhaps, have stepped aside
From virtue's path serene—
Have trod the way so large and wide,
And evil's sorrow seen.
Let them come in,—O God, how slow
We are to be like Thee!
Can we not throw a line to them
That die upon the sea?

To have my old friends visit me,
To see again their smiles
As we'd gather up the treasures
From far-off otherwhiles,—
It would make my heart leap forward
To catch the morning-glow
In the never-ending kingdom
Of all the friends I know.

A CALL TO DUTY.

The Muses asked a song of me;
I answered, "Why?" and "When?"
They said: "Give not some mystery,
But give a truth to men,

"And let it issue from your heart
In simple, artless ways,
To some weak soul a strength impart,
Bring back the one who strays.

"And speak not with a faltering word;
With firm lips, spirit-moved,
That hearts may know, when they have heard,
The truth itself is proved.

"Make thy heart pure," a great Voice spoke,
"For life lies in thy way;
If blight comes to it, or a yoke,
In vain shall be thy day!

“Make thy heart true in brotherhood,
For all is naught but this;
Then all thy words are understood—
Thou sowest fields of bliss.

“This lofty and far realm attain;
Go with the Spirit’s flight;
Thyself, the low, and all disdain,
To draw men to the height.

“Sow peace, and let its fruitage lure
From all life’s widening span
The good, the bad, the rich, the poor,—
A brotherhood of man.

“Holy and high thy calling be,
Molding the after-years;
Gladness and joy thy heart may see,
Or drenched ofttimes in tears.

“Be bearer of eternal thought,
Just sowing in the soil;
And when the plan of years is wrought,
Then comes the fruit of toil.

“From out beyond the shadowy years
I send a gleam to thee;
Walk by it, in it, with no fears
For all that is to be.

“Then let the vision fill thy soul;
On desert strands of life
See billowy waves of beauty roll,
And all the end of strife.”

THE TRADE OF DEMONS.

I feel to-night the burden of this world,
And through my heart its thunderbolts are
hurled—

Not that my cup can heal its guilt or woe—
But on and on and on they go.

O monsters, cease; in yon great city, cease!
And can it bring you bliss or bring you peace?
Why drag your garments in the blood of souls,
Defying all that law controls?

Release that victim, demon; stay thy crime;
For thou shalt sink down to the lowest clime
Of hell, so low that fire can add no pain,
And such will justly be thy gain.

TO AN APPLE.

How fair thou art to me,
There waiting on that tree!
Around thee clustered leaves of fading green!
Thy coat of gold is new,
To nature's order true,—
What placed thee there, the sky and earth
between?

The frost has on thee lain,
And faded with the train
Of flying mists that wrapped the hills at
dawn.

The sun has mellowed thee
To fill my heart with glee;
But soon thy light and beauty will be gone.

O, what deliciousness
Within thy limits press!

What soothing powers are lurking there with
thee!

 If thou canst linger on
 Till pleasant days are gone,
Beside some cheerful fireside thou wilt be.

 If I were still a boy,
 This chance I would employ
To hurl thee with some missile from that
throne;

 But now, in older years,
 I stand with awe and tears
And wonder at thy growth and power alone.

 There's sunshine on thy side;
 It has thine armor tried,
And thou hast woven all its fiery beams
 Within that net of gold,
 In sweet aromas rolled,
And now from thee some sun-ray brilliance
streams.

Swinging in freedom there,
Thou art so wondrous fair
I would that I might know about thy life:
What dreams hast thou pursued?
From what low state and crude
Hast thou ascended, and how great the strife?

O, magic powers that laid
The plans, and such have made,
That planned the perfect shape and golden
hue,
Which gathered sweets that fly
And sunrays from the sky,—
I would that I might have thy leadings too!

And am I less than this
Which thou hast brought to bliss?
Is my beginning more unpromising?
If blossoms can be wrought
Into that wondrous thought,
To me what will thy fashioned leadings bring?

I do not need to know
Thy workings all below,
In clod and branch and airy spaces round;
I know they are secure,
And ever will endure;
I know that we are rising from the ground.

And in some autumn day
In years so far away,
We can not see them from the highest hills;
What has been planned will be,
Like ripe fruit on the tree,
Which hope and love and all the law fulfills.

THE RETURN OF JOY.

Somewhere in the sunlight
 Flows a happy stream;
By its side I wandered,
 Knew the fairest dream,
When my careless fancies
 Roamed by dale and hill,—
And that happy vision
 Follows with me still.

Quietly the spirit
 Fell upon my heart—
Spirit of the freedom
 That world could impart—
Like reposeful meadows
 That the evenings fold,
Just one bird to carol,
 Just one joy to hold.

Wide world filled with brilliance,
Held in one great peace;
My heart dreaming ever,
Never asked release;
Waters silvery gliding
Over pebbly ways;
Violets abiding
In the early days,—

All were happy friendships,
Winning all my heart,
Making joys spring ever,
Making new hopes start,
Giving me a courage
That would dare and do,—
For that world was happy,
And the sky was blue.

From that stream I wandered,
Wandered far away,
Where the winds are bitter,
Rasping all the day;

And where peace is broken
Like a shattered vase;
Back through hazy distance
All my way I trace.

And I saw the meadows
Vanish with the vale,
And in distance dimly
Saw the streamlet's trail;
Heard the bird-song dying,
Saw the violet fade,
And my heart would wonder
Why I had not stayed.

In the happy sunlight—
Happy still to-day,—
Under blue skies glowing,
Moving on its way,
Is the far-off streamlet,
Where my joy was born,
Singing to the violets,
Laughing with the morn.

But that stream has vanished
Only for a while,
For it runs and wanders
Onward with a smile;
Many hills it passes,
Runs through many dales,
And in all the distance
Its flowing never fails.

Yonder in the distance,
Where the skies are blue
That bright stream is flowing,
Flowing back to you.
Heart, then look and listen;
Patience just a while;
For that stream will greet you
With a new-born smile.

It was in a garden
Where my joy was born;
It was in God's garden
In the early morn;

And that garden reaches
Round eternal spheres,
Meets them who go forward
In the drift of years.

Toiling men and women,
Hearts of care and woe,
If you just go forward,
Thither will you go.
Meadow's breath will greet you,
Sunny stream and sky,
All that happy freedom,
If you'll only try.

You who lie in shadows
Of dark walls and high,
Knowing while you're living
What it is to die,
Ways eternal wait you
Where large worlds and free,
One upon the other,
Rise for you to see.

You who on your shoulders
 Bear the heavy weight
Of the world's sad toiling,
 Toiling soon and late,
With your head bowed over,
 Bending toward the ground,
You may climb God's ladder,
 Mount it round by round.

You who are pursuing
 Wealth's bright way and power,
Madly striving forward,
 Falling in an hour,
You may know heart values,
 Know God's garden bliss,
If you will not barter
 That fair realm for this.

To reposeful meadows
 In a boundless sphere
We are going forward,
 Onward every year;

For I caught the vision
In life's early morn
Yonder by that streamlet,
Where my joy was born.

Oh, the bliss of living
Where the hills are green
And where sun and shadow
Lie in peace serene,
And where nature's music
Sings from shade and light,—
Surely that is God's way,
Surely that is right!

Oh, the joy of looking
Upward in that place,
Looking for the Presence
Whose great power we trace!
Faith was lost in seeing,
Dreaming was not dream;
Yonder by that streamlet
Things are what they seem.

I have caught the vision,
 Wandered from it far,
Not in error's bondage,
 But where truth's ways are;
For our human pathway
 Leads in love through toil,
And these days of waiting
 Need no soul despoil.

To reposeful meadows,
 Fragrance-filled with love,
Quiet in the light and shade,
 Clear, blue sky above,
Years will drift us onward
 If we strive and dream;
We shall walk and live and live
 Beside that meadow stream.

A RURAL TOILER.

As that man works he sings a song;
It's joy for him, the day's not long,—
And I have thought that heaven will be,
And is, a place for such as he.

“Well, after all,” he said, one day,
“We're goin' to have fine crop o' hay;”
And then he smiled through that rough beard,
“The Lord is good; I'm not afeared.”

He's toiled enough to have a home;
It is a place where he may roam
And in a great big world be free,—
I watched him work in quiet glee.

The spring that flowed beneath the hill
Would in the face of summer spill

Its cooling sprays; 't was all in fun,—
Then would the heat of summer run.

When evening came—I can not tell
In happy words about the spell—
I wish that you could look and see
The beauty and serenity.

The sunset past, the fields asleep,
The moon would through the azure creep,
Would look “round where the heavens were bare,”
And down upon that cottage there.

The old man heard the songs outside,—
For evenings sing, as flows the tide,—
And, sitting in his restful chair,
Would say, “Ain't this world fair!”

Some like the city's pomp and glare,
But, somehow, God's not living there;
The quiet light they do not know
With which the green fields overflow.

May heaven forbid that we should miss,
While waiting here, these fields of bliss;
May some great spirit drive us free
And out where God delights to be.

My heart now holds the old man's smile,
His words are with me all the while,—
These words that make God's world endeared,
"The Lord is good; I'm not afeared."

THE SOUL WORLD.

My soul is walking in the light,
Not floating like some formless spright,
Not moving like some ghostly thing,—
My soul is walking, and can sing.

I'm plucking flowers beside that stream
Upon which smiles of heaven beam;
I'm breathing air that gives the soul
Life more and more as ages roll.

I'm looking here at heaven's wall,
Hung with the masterpieces all
Of all the worlds, of time or place,—
What joyous things I see, what grace!

I'm listening to some happy songs
(Here in this realm there are no wrongs),
And like eternal ocean-spray
They rise to gladden all the way.

The seed that 's planted in the sod
Leaves there its dust and moves toward God;
A nobler form to it is given,
And so the soul goes up to heaven.

Thus did my soul dream, and 't was true,
For out across the distance blue
I saw the life that is to be,
I saw the world that is for me.

THE NATIONS WITH US.

Auspicious time when these have come,
Not with the battle-sound of drum

Our land to conquer;
With silent march from many lands they roam,
To make this place their better home.
From stifling poverty they flee, and woe,
From deadening tyranny they go,
To seek afar a realm of life
Where joy and hope are rife.

And shall we call their aims ignoble, base con-
triving,
Or see in human hearts a worthy striving
Upward, outward, toward an ampler sky?
They come to us from every clime—

All tongues and unlike thoughts and ways;
A wondrous train, ceaseless, sublime,
Groping to larger days.

To reach the other shore we send our light upon
the wave,
The minds in error's night to save:
And when these billows on our shores are rolled,
Leave not the truth untold.

Nor do they come at our behest:
Thronging our cities and our lands,
Crowding our shores, though we protest,
They toil with eager heart and hands,
Willing ofttimes to serve in low estate,
Grasping the chance that others hate.

Then let it be a home benign for all—
Fulfillment of divine decree,
Where broadening destiny shall call
All nations to be free.
Let us with plains and mountains here,
This new-born continent to span,
With spacious sky, a temple rear
Of thoughts and joys, to God, to man.

Might shall be used, a blessed dower,
For human joys; and envied power
For weal of all to plan.
May peaceful waters in the West,
The verdant vales and mountain-store,
On ceaselessly, bespeak our rest,
And hold our wealth from shore to shore.

True, broad, and high, then, we shall build,
And waft the light benign afar:
Let human murmurings be stilled,
And teach what human glories are.
Build truth and justice in our land
Until the upper dome they meet;
Upbuild, nor cease, and let them stand
Till heaven a perfect state can greet.

And we shall make them sons with us to live,
With hearts that love to give
Our nation loyalty and praise
And aid us on to loftier days.
To freedom's life shall they be born,
By truth and law, until they scorn

To do their chosen nation wrong;
And hearts be molded in their breast
To stand of fire and sword the test
Of any foe, or near, or far,
That comes our country's peace to mar.

This shall we see in time's advance,—

A Friend unseen works for his own—
Nor accident, nor fate, nor chance

Shall bring us to these years fullgrown.
One shall we be in heart and aim,

Led not by greed that might controls,
And firm as mountain-rock our fame,

Built on the wealth of human souls.

The wave, en-moving now, we can not check—

We need not, but to reckon

The call to higher, nobler ways—

Each unjust, wrongful act delays.

Our country! yet not ours,

If heedless we shall be of that sure plan
To found a kingdom where peace flowers

In beauteous form for man.

The days ago full well we've known,
And glad our hearts that they have flown:
To One who knoweth best, gladly we give our
 wills,
Knowing He guides through all the ills
Of chance and fate,
And brings us, soon or late,
To His safe way of peace,
And all the promise of the years fulfills.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON.

The rude beginnings of that brilliant life
Fill us with wonder since it won the strife—
The strife of many trying years and toil—
With spirit fortune could not make nor foil.

A diamond is cut and carved and burned
From earth's low substance others would have
 spurned,
Shines and will shine increasingly for aye
To help illuminate God's crystal day.

A cabin without light or human joy
Held in its grip of untaught ways a boy
Upon whom centuries had pressed their weight,
Whose soul men's greed had made all desolate.

For him no freedom's truth shone like a star
To guide, but he knew all there is to mar;

His own, God's own, to him had not appeared,
Away from all God's ways his soul was reared.

But one, a great soul born of later days,
Who stood and toiled "amid eternal ways,"
Then gave the mighty stroke that great souls
 give,
Bringing the truth to men to help them live.

Tall and benign and reaching to the stars,
He smote the wrongs of men and all that mars
The soul of weak or strong or rich or poor,
And wrongs of men his blows could not endure.

His smile beneficent like rising morn
Did hills and valleys of our land adorn;
It reached the cabin homes untaught, unfree,
And round them blossomed flowers of liberty.

It was a great soul living through a day
That called a soul in darkness far away;
It heard a Master's voice benign and good,
And, listening to it, wondered as it stood.

That soul then lifted at the heavy weight
And struggled toward the light delayed so late;
No firm-wrought, rock-built past on which to
stand,
It only could reach up with that weak hand.

He moved, and—Oh, what thought and act sublime,
To see the soul in this eternal climb,
Building by its sheer force a rock-built past,
And coming to its own and God's at last!

We wonder at the power of soul we see,
The movements of a heart when it is free;
We wonder at the diamond cut bright
From earth's poor substance in such lowly
plight.

Then let us now believe the worth of soul,
And help with him to yonder glorious goal
His race, and all, these waiting heights to climb,
Eternal ways await the triumph-time.

Look upward, move, dream that your soul may
dare;

For every soul a triumph waits somewhere;
The vision splendid breaks above the hills,
And God eternal promise thus fulfills.

AVIS.

She had just fairly learned to walk,
And run a little, here and there,
With sprightly feet and prattling talk
That make bright childhood yet more fair.

She 'd bring to me a book to read,
And, smiling, say, "Your book," to me;
And happy childhood's kindly deed
Is heaven's highest ministry.

She 'd thrum the strings of the guitar,—
"I tan not play, but I tan try;"
And say, "My 'tar, my 'tar, my 'tar!"
'T was music from the highest sky.

I 'd leave the door for down the street,
And watching gleefully my way,
She 'd say, "By by, by by!" so sweet
That joy went with me all the day.

One day our joys she could not share,
And on the sofa, where she lay,
The cruel heat felt round her hair—
In solemn quietness she lay.

“By by,” she said—soft words and slow,
Her face turned gently to the wall;
Strange words that have such weights of woe,
I hear them call and call and call.

The morning came, and all was gone,
The night continued into day,
With speechless lips to look upon;
“By by, by by,” had flown away.

Mornings kiss the roses year by year
And search and wait her smile to meet,
And in the upper air I hear,
“Your book! My ’tar! By by!” so sweet.

SORROW.

Blow withering winds and chill,
All things you can not kill!
Put on your sable robes, O Night,
You make the stars more bright!
Angels attend the hearts of woe
And follow them where'er they go
In sorrowings unearned—
Guardian angels, gentle and concerned.

Buffet the soul defenseless here,
Weighed down, unfirm in fear!
Sorrow, so virulent and strong,
Thy way can not be long:
The skies are higher than thy reach,
Life shall thy rulings all impeach,
Cast off the earth-born plight,
Where thou art not, to find unchanged delight.

VICARIOUS TOILERS.

As I sit in the firelight and shadows,
While the fierce wind outside doth blow,
I can dream of the beautiful meadows
And find here a refuge from woe.

As I dream here I wonder and wonder
At the magic of joy I know,
And I search for the sources, and ponder:
What hands could these pleasures bestow?

Then I think of my debt to my brothers,
To them who perhaps do not know
That I sit here in pleasure with others,
And look at the bright firelight's glow.

Far away under valley and mountain,
Where earth's heavy shadows lie still,
They have opened the sources, the fountain,
With heart-trying labor and will.

They have fallen, the many, and perished,
Have sunk in the low earth's death damps,
And the joy and the hope that they cherished
Went out into darkness like lamps.

And I call it vicarious labors
To build up a kingdom for me;
They have fallen, my brothers, my neighbors,
But the joy of their toiling I see.

As I sit here and wait in the gloaming,
And revel in eventide's bliss,
And hear the strong hearts that are moaning,
What will my heart answer to this?

I will stand with vicarious toilers,
And will stand with them now in line;
I will watch for man's foes and the spoilers,
And will give men this heart of mine.

I would build up a palace of beauty,
Of men such a palace may be;
And it only requires man's duty
This kingdom to build of the free.

Let us help bear the weight of men's sorrows,
Let us share with them half of our joy,
And to go with them on to bright morrows,
Our time and our lives to employ.

We are sure in God's way of the splendor
Of the manhood all glorified;
We have seen the great power of the Sender,
Of the gift of the One who died.

SYMPATHY.

My heart may be despoiled
Of joy and filled with pain,—
I know those who have toiled
In wrong, beneath its strain:
My heart may be in fear,
No balm for it be given,
I'd give a song of cheer
To all who are storm-driven.

From out the night of pain
I'd send a cheerful ray,
To be another's gain,
Illuminate his way;
I'd send some lowly touch
Of sympathy divine,
And smile to see a joy
Made by this heart of mine.

I would have others know
The shaded path and cool,
Though I be forced to go
Beneath a stern fate's rule.
When I must tread the thorns
And know life's bitter lot,
My hope is always this,—
That others know them not.

I'd give a hope to you,
The sorely-tried and sad;
I would that I might know
The way to make you glad,—
Then let the nobler Heart,
That o'er thy sorrows bled,
Be thine in sympathy,
And all its blessings shed.

THE AFTER-WORLD.

And will the hills be there that we have so much
loved on earth?

The rivers winding, silvery, through woods
and meadowland?

The morning's softly-tinted skies, the robin's
evening mirth;

Of flowers and trees, all summer scenes, a joy-
ous band?

It will not be a world of spirit, mystical and
strange,

But all that we have loved is there in joyous
beauty bright;

We tread the limitless, increasing, ever-luring
range

Of all that here, in these first days, has fash-
ioned our delight.

Pure realm of bliss, so wonderful in all that
we have known

Of spring's glad life and summer's touch of
peace in cheery days,

When thou art ours, no joys, no friends we
knew on earth have flown;

We leave the world to tread the same glad,
peaceful, higher ways.

WHERE JOY IS REAL.

O vernal Wood, how glorious! Thy shade
A calm brings to my soul; and every note
Of bird sings peace to me. I would lie here
And look at yon blue sky that overarches
In beneficence, and dream away the
Days if that were life. The joys so calm,
So undisturbed by all the sin and wrong,
I would have here for aye, and call it heaven.

But if my soul must now forego this joy,
One thing, O vernal Wood, my heart has learned:
Joy is real; and in the soul-realms God has
Made reigns heaven. Joy needs but some calm
shade like

Thee to make it live. Though here ofttimes the
Soul is buffeted, and felled by blows of
Sin—sin of some other hearts—plottings of

Those whose ways I can not help; or felled and
Buffeted by blows of chance and fate. Pain
Gnaws like angry waves that gnaw the shore;
waves

That are stronger than the helplessness of
That 'gainst which they beat; but in some silent
Virgin shade like thee, O silent Wood,
Sometime, somewhere the joys that live may
reign
All undisturbed, and heaven then is reached.

IN THE EVENING.

A robin yonder gayly sings
In the evening time;
He sings more sweetly than the brook
Or the poet's rhyme;
He is singing clearly, purely
In his cheery way,
Singing from the dripping branches
At the close of day.

He gives the heart a quiet rest
From care and all the sad;
While he is singing at his best
The moments all are glad.
The peaceful, vanished days arise
Within the heart's domain,
And hopes aspiring to the skies,
And joys a merry train.

Sweet bird, thy music heaven hath sent,
Sing always on to me,
And make me with this world content,
Lead where I can not see;
Sing in the twilight of my days,
When all seems dark and drear,
That I may leave these earthly ways
While thy glad song I hear.

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.

Christmas spirit's in the air—
Oh, how beautiful and fair
All the world around me seems!
Brings to me my childhood dreams.

Brings the days of long ago,
When the trees swayed to and fro
In the crisp, bright Christmas air,
When the heart had not a care.

Brings to me the old folks too,—
Those who always would be true,—
Gathered round the old hearth-stone,
And not one of us alone.

With the thought of Santa Claus
Pensive memories come, and pause,
All our peace and joy to test,—
Whither fled are all the rest?

Pensively they come, yet glad,
Thoughts of happiness we've had;
What has been is with us still;
Violet or daffodil,

Early friends or early joys,
Manhood's fame or childhood's toys
Evermore the heart control,
When they've spoken to the soul.

Christmas spirit, glad and gay,
Angel-like so far away,
Thou hast followed through the years,
Frightened not by storm nor tears.

Onward still thy way shall be,
In our hearts so pleasantly,
Speaking solaces and cheer,
Guarding us from doubt and fear.

Wither friends and chums and all?
Whither to them may we call,
See their faces bright with smiles,
Know them through the years of miles?

Whither? Though they still are near,
They have gone from year to year,
Dropping like the autumn leaves,
Gathered like the garnered sheaves.

Christmas spirit? Thanks to Thee,
Santa Claus of Galilee,
Who this Christmas spirit gave,
Every human heart to save.

Draw my wandering soul to Thee,
And when by the silent sea
I embark for worlds before,
Waft me to Thy Christmas shore.

HELP ME TO SHARE.

The bliss my heart possesses now
I fain would share with one somehow
That has a heavy weight to bear;
Vicarious One, teach me to share.

So much of pain and care I see,—
And one I know who can not be
Released from pain this side the grave—
Teach me to share my joy, and save.

He sits, the one I know, in pain,
One whom disease has slowly slain;
He waits, just waits, release from this;
I pray to share with him my bliss.

I feel the woe of other hearts,—
Strange power it is that so imparts

The gloom of souls that must repine,—
Can they not share this joy of mine?

Let me by word, some magic word,
That by the aching heart is heard,
Speak, or some happy deed perform,
The winter-blasted heart to warm.

Vicarious One, teach me Thy way,
For power to share, to give, I pray,
To bring to souls now sorrow-driven
Some glory and some touch of heaven.

A VANISHED SMILE.

The baby does not smile to-day;
It's like a faded rose to me,—
The vanishing of some bright ray,
It always is a joy to see.

Of course, I know he'll smile some more,—
They say he is unwell to-day;
To me it's like some barren shore,
From every happy thing away.

Like "hosts of golden daffodils"
The wavelets of his smilings are;
Like greening fields and singing rills,
Or like a bird-song from afar.

Now, while this flower is closed and drooped
I'll look upon its vanished smile
And wonder where are scenes so fair
That could the weary hours beguile.

PERFECT BEAUTY.

I love the autumn beauty with its many chang-
ing leaves;

I love the late-surviving flowers that scent the
autumn breeze;

I love the brooklet, singing as it moves in hazy
light,—

All these are intimations of a world more pure,
more bright.

I love to wait and let them hold communion
with my heart,

Their deep, eternal, changeless truths of beauty
to impart;

I love, while walking in their midst, to hear
them gently say,

We are the angel-fingers pointing to the better
way.

For surely in some realm, somewhere, our hu-
man eyes can't see,
There must, for us, in some great plan, a per-
fect beauty be;
And some time, if we follow on the leadings
that we know,
God in His wisdom, in His time, will perfect
beauty show.

Till then I'll watch these angel hands direct-
ing me above,
And more than all the things of earth these
earthly beauties love,
Till some time, when the soul has reached the
limit of this space,
God, in His goodness, will reveal His beauty
face to face.

AN HOUR OF PEACE.

I sit and dream, this flowering tree beside,
Here in the twilight dim;
Some wondrous presence doth with me abide,
I hear an angel's hymn.

The sun has gone to rest beneath yon hill,
Slowly the shadows roam;
The leaf, the bird, and all the air are still,—
I'm dreaming here of home.

I look back through the years, and voices hear
In merry, youthful chime;
The shadows thickly gathering, coming near,
Teach me the flight of time.

But in this deepening quietness I feel
No fear that comes to me;
I'm dreaming, and my dream is ever real,
Of homes more fair to see.

I go o'er heights of time with rapturous flight,
And peace goes all the way ;
We're treading where they have not heard of
night,
In meads where blossoms sway.

O gracious peace, the gift of this sweet hour,
Thou dost inspire my dream ;
To this new world I'm carried by thy power ;
Of it thou art a gleam.

Thou dost spread sails, so wondrous in their
sweep,
Filled with fresh breezes strong,
And over heavy billows thou canst leap
As smoothly as a song.

Faith, hope, and power, and love are all with
thee ;
An angel troop are they ;
O'er breaking hearts and time and destiny
With thee they all hold sway.

Peace of this evening hour, give me thy smile,
Still in this blessed realm
Lead to the far-off, airy afterwhile;
Be ever at the helm.

And now my heart can know that world afar
And dream of all its bliss;
I now with thee can go where angels are
And find that world in this.

A fresh, sweet breath comes sweeping, seems to
fall
Down rugged, pearly steeps;
It comes truth-laden, fragrance-filled, and all,
And o'er my dreaming sweeps.

This hour of peace the sun left when he set,
The birds left with their song;
It tells me that the world is noble yet,
Lights all my way along.

I'm dreaming now of home, of that blest isle
Out through the mist of years,

Where evening peace makes every heart to smile
And where there are no fears.

Blest citadel of Love that reigns o'er all
Through vastest stretch of space,
Thine is the peace, and thine to me the call,
And so to all the race.

THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

And why this shameful deed?
Was it in God, or man, the need?
The pure and innocent must die,
A law of heaven to satisfy?
Had wisdom infinite foreseen
This tragedy to come between
The primal birth of man
And life's last, farthest, highest span?

Yea, Love had planned this day
To draw man to the upward way,—
Knowing the fateful time would be
When hearts His goodness could not see,—
To show what right and heaven require,
What souls must do that would aspire
To worlds of perfect bliss,
More true, more glorious than this.

Then if Love planned it so,
To keep man from a time of woe,
What willful heart can slight the love,
Disdain or spurn the call above?
In Calvary rejoice, O soul!
And see afar love's luring goal;
And let this be thine aid,
Move in this plan forever made.

A call of love for you,—
Hear this, a call from heaven's blue.
O human frailty, here thy stay,
Walk firmly in this love-planned way;
Thy soul forbid the sins that come
To keep the heart and senses dumb,
That drown sweet callings to the height,
Lofty and far, above the night.

A SLAIN MINSTREL.

Till now he sang, and, Oh, how joyously
He romped in airy fields!
That music which he made so artlessly,
A realm of cheer reveals.

Wide ways were in his song, and early dawn,
And freshness of the dew;
You'd sip the morning sweets ere they were
gone,
While he would sing to you.

As he would sail, then from the branches sing,
The breezes were more soft;
And with him speeding on the open wing
My heart would sail aloft.

Sweet melody it was, tuned to the brook,
The swaying leaf, and sky;

From open field and every shady nook
Came music in reply.

Thy power is broken, and thy silent wing
Attests a cruel hand;
Thy free and merry heart has ceased to sing,
And o'er thy form I stand.

Those eyes are closed that sparkled like the sun;
Thy head is drooped in sleep;
And all thy summer joys had just begun—
The more these make me weep.

Away from southland orchards thou didst fly
With longings in thy breast
To sing thy songs beneath our summer sky,
And in our trees to nest.

But thou art slain, and thoughtless ones will say,
Why do you waste the tear?
They did not see thy flight, nor know thy way,
Nor hear thy song of cheer.

Sweet minstrel of the open air and tree,
Tuned to my soul's deep need,
My heart no longer sails aloft with thee—
It droops here in the mead.

I could not weep so much if nature's hand
Had gently stopped thy song;
And through my tears I can not understand
How one could do thee wrong.

I leave thee here, thy song will go with me;
Sleep where the grasses wave;
And may the human heart be taught to see
The meaning of thy grave.

THE POPE'S REFUSAL TO RECEIVE MR. FAIRBANKS.

Let us clasp hands, why brandish arms?

We should be gentle, and not strive;
The time is past for war's alarms,
To help to save we should contrive.

Time was when we would quarrel and fight;

We did not know the way of truth:
We were in darkness of the night,—
The night has passed away in sooth.

Truth now is mighty, and will save;

We need not fear its power and way;
We need not over kingdoms rave;
Truth will illuminate our day.

And error dies before its power,
Though gayly beautiful it seems;
Will perish in some happy hour,
And with it all men's selfish dreams.

You can not stay the ocean tide;
You can not stop the northwest wind,—
In men's rank falsehood they have died;
The great have perished when they've sinned.

You can not stop the dawning day:
God's day it is, and it will be;
And God's sunshine must have its sway,
And so with truth and liberty.

Not for the sake of office high
Should millions live and millions die;
God's ministry is done to men,
The lowly everywhere; and when

The great One came to guide our way,
He suffered with us and would share;
He suffered in the heat of day,
And said, I will your burdens bear.

He said, "The truth will make you free,"
And looked far toward a wondrous time;
He pointed out, and said, "Now see!"
And gazed above the hills sublime.

Let us clasp hands who know the truth
Or who are willing truth to find;
The time is coming soon, in sooth,
When blind are ruined with the blind.

Great Sister of the vanished night,
Thou hast thy dark robes never shed;
Put on the robes of truth and light,
And then thy way we will not dread.

We will embark with thee, with thee,
On vastness that can know no shore;
In love and truth and purity
We'll sail, and sail for evermore.

A CALL OF JOY.

Look at the world with all her smiles;
She 'll lure thee with her sweet beguiles
To dreamland in the far-away
And make thee glad to-day.

Upon the morning hilltop look,
Or at the pebbled, wavy brook;
The fields spread far in radiant air,—
There's joy everywhere.

Loll on the ocean's sunny shore
And hear its music o'er and o'er;
Its billowy grandeur, sweet and strange,
Thy heavy heart will change.

All nature tries to heal thy pain,
To give thee peace for all thy strain

Of heart and mind, and spirit sad,
To make thee ever glad.

Then look thou up to heaven's blue;
There's something beckoning there for you,—
A call of light and joy and love
From nature's world above.

A WOODLAND MESSAGE.

Sweet fern, thou dweller of the shady wood,
While sitting now by thee
I'm thinking of thy native hardihood
Beside some mammoth tree.

Although the snows drift deep, and fierce winds
blow,
Thy cheerful smile is mine;
I'm thinking of that world where thou didst
grow,
And feel that bliss of thine.

Vast was thy home beneath tall-arching trees!
So narrow now thy sphere!
Why should we take thee from thy native ease
And build thy prison here?

While now with thee soft summer breezes wave,
 With fragrance overthrown,
And here thou dost the summer fragments save,
 With thee its peace is flown.

Sweet fern, I hear the purl of sylvan streams,
 The pure and crystal-clear;
Calm shade rests in my heart and in my dreams
 While thou art waiting near.

Thou bearer of this message wild and free,
 That to my heart has flown,
I can not sing so joyously to thee,
 But give thee back thine own.

And may thy song abide within my heart
 Like shaded sylvan streams,
Untouched by all the other world apart,
 And ever be my dreams.

SLAUGHTER OF THE INNOCENTS.

The little hands, unhardened yet by toil,
 Reached over toward the plate,
The mother's anxious words made them recoil;
 "Your share," she said, "you ate."
The sunken cheek then flushed with hectic hue,
 Assumed a look more wan;
"Then, mamma," she replied, "what can I do?"
 And soon the child was gone.

Out in the corner where no grass can grow,
 And sun rays scarce can fall,
A little voice was singing, weak and low,
 A childish, plaintive call.
The gloomy waste of space all colorless,
 No grass nor branches fair,
The very essence of all dreariness—
 Why should she languish there?

Her plaintive heart was innocent and pure
As any morning dew;
And yet she had this sorrow to endure—
Who was the cause? Who knew?
She tried to play; her weakening hands would
fall,
And motionless and still
She looked along the dreary, sunless wall
As her blue eyes would fill.
“I could not eat my own and brother’s part;
There’s not enough for two,”
She said, her hand upon her trembling heart,
“And yet we are so few!”
Her voice so weak, yet seemed to heaven would
reach,
Would break a heart of stone.
And would it not the ways of men impeach?
Some gods of men dethrone?
Should that pure voice not make the selfish
weep,
Not rise o’er mountain’s height?

Through all the world its tenderness to sweep,
And to enthrone the right?
Had earth or heaven no promise to her given
When born into this world?
And should she thus to misery be driven,
To hunger's clutches hurled?

And soon she slept, but pain had left its trace,
Pain that should ne'er have been;
For roses had been blooming in her face
Till blight had entered in.
She slept with dust and ashes at her feet,
A pillow made of stone;
Strange voices could be heard with her repeat
Her sorrow-song alone.

The sunless, murky air rose foul above,
Around gray walls rose high;
But through the bleakness rose the star of Love
And fell down from the sky.
It touched the wounded heart and eased the pain,
Its light filled all the place;

Her angels took her with a shining train,
Who see the Father's face.

Her voice is singing where no hunger roams;
No sunless space she knows;
Where greed and selfishness can blight no homes;
To drift the heart, no snows.
And now her earthly song is glorified,
It ravishes the skies;
And it will sing where greed is gratified,
Sing till the monster dies.

We have broad fields and mountains filled with
gold,
And rivers rich in power,
And valleys laden with their wealth untold,
Increasing every hour.
We have strong hearts and minds, those that are
pure,
That love the nobly great;
Why should there be the starving of the poor,
And all this low estate?

O men whose hearts are brave and nobly true,
Push upward in this aim;
Let us neglect no service we can do,
That greed may never claim
The little one a victim for the mart—
The innocent and pure—
For greed of gain makes men of stony heart
To slay the weak and poor.

PERSONAL FREEDOM.

Let us be free from care,
Let others bear the sorrow;
What matter how they fare!
Let us no trouble borrow.

Our wives will make the bread
And worry with expenses;
We will not look ahead,
But live in present tenses.

Let us have no heartache,
While others suffer sadly
Who labor for our sake;
We will accept it gladly.

Let us be wholly free
To do whatever pleases;
In liberty and glee—
Our sails turned to the breezes.

How sweet the care-free life
Where other hearts are breaking!
How quiet in the strife
Where other minds are aching!

Ah, brother, let us know
Freedom always from all strain,
While gleefully we go
In building on others' pain.

THE PASSING OF CHRISTIANITY.

“The Christian religion shall pass away,”

We hear a learned professor say ;

“There ’s something better for me and for you ;

The false is going, we ’re finding the true.

“Ideals, ‘grotesque and grinning,’ now must go ;

For modern thought, they are too mean and low.

Mount Sinai’s law and Calvary’s pure light

Can not be final, they can not be right.

“The world so long by them has been deceived,

Deluded ; has their teachings, claims believed

Until our latest thought has grown mature,

And falsehood we need not accept, endure.

“Men’s minds have been enslaved, misled too
long ;

Great Tennyson and Lincoln have been wrong :

A brighter, saner day for us is here;
The way of life and truth is coming clear.

“What empireship of joy, of love, what dower,
Have through the years been built on error’s
power!

What springs of hope, like Milton’s dazzling
dream,
Have risen from this cloudy, murky stream!

“What peace as true as poets’ ‘fields of sleep,’
That helps us climb the mountain’s rugged
steep!

What heights of character have souls attained
When by this force of great untruth constrained!

“What wondrous art, like that of Angelo,
Its high and holy blessing could bestow,
When by this foolish claim of ages gone
Inspired and led, uplifted and lured on!

“What governments have builded on this law,
Stood firm and great, the world to overawe!

What songs could this theme, low, untrue, beget,
For us, 'Lest we forget, lest we forget!'

"But now this untrue faith shall pass away;
We're looking, coming toward a fairer day,
And error's deadening night will soon be past;
We shall have reached the holy truth at last."

We do not lament this death; deceived so long,
Yet we are prone to pray, its life prolong;
But if this power shall surely pass away,
The gods of fate, in helplessness, we pray:

Give us more truth than Sinai's Law, and let
A surer faith than springs from Olivet
Be ours; more love than Calvary can give;
With something better than we have, hopes live.





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